

Administrator's Update for 4/20/11
By Ray Sandrock, County Administrator

In coordination and cooperation with the Sarasota County All Faith Food Bank, our Veteran Services division began a new program to have boxes of food given out to veterans who are in need of groceries. The boxes will be distributed from the Port Charlotte Veteran Services office at the Cultural Center on Aaron Street and the Englewood office located on San Casa Drive. Priority distribution of the boxes will be to homeless veterans. The veteran must provide a discharge certificate or Military/VA ID Card and have exhausted all other avenues. Veterans in need can contact the Port Charlotte location at 941.764.5579 or the Englewood location at 941.681.3716. Anyone who wishes to donate food or funds may contact the All Faiths Food Bank at 941.379.6333.

EDO strategic plan

The Charlotte County Economic Development Office (EDO) has started working on developing a strategic plan with the help of John Rhodes from Moran, Stahl & Boyer, LLC. Roundtable discussions have been held with members of the business community, by reaching out to industry sectors including health care, land development, commercial real estate, building, manufacturing, banking, education and government. The strategic plan is expected to be complete by July 1 of this year.

SBA workshop

The EDO will be hosting a Small Business Administration (SBA) workshop on Friday, May 13 at 10 a.m. in Room 119 of the County Administration Building in Port Charlotte. This workshop is designed to help business owners who would like to take advantage of SBA loans for their commercial operations and also business owners who face looming balloon payments on their commercial real estate loans. Presenters at the workshop will be representatives from the U.S. Small Business Administration, SunTrust and the Florida Business Development Corporation. Registration may be done on-line at: www.FloridaEDO.com/SBALoanWorkshopRegistration.aspx or by calling the EDO at 941.627.3023.

BMX success

Earlier this month our Charlotte Harbor Visitor & Convention Bureau partnered with the host club, Charlotte BMX, to hold the Sunshine State Association Qualifier event on April 2 and 3. The qualifiers took place at the Charlotte BMX track at Carmalita Park, which was recently renovated with an award of over \$23,000 from the Board of County Commissioners. The renovations included a track coating and an irrigation system, with more than twenty volunteers donating their labor. The event was a huge success and attracted athletes from all over the state, with over 700 riders competing each day. Along with the family members and friends who were in attendance, the event generated an estimated \$676,502 in direct non-local expenditures.

SC3 program

Several staff members of our Solid Waste division visited the Charlotte Technical Center to do an inspection as part of the state's School Chemical Cleanout Program (SC3). They reviewed the chemicals used by the Cosmetology, Automotive and Health Science Programs and their disposal methods. The group has visited and inspected a total of four schools for this state program.